

1 **TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD**

2
3 **TOWN COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING**

4 **March 10, 2020, 6:45 p.m.,**

5 **Legislative Chambers**

6
7 **Re: Ordinance Reducing the Number of Parking**
8 **Spaces Required in a Food Truck Area.**

A p p e a r a n c e s:

Town Council Members Present:

MAYOR SHARI CANTOR

LEON DAVIDOFF

CAROL BLANKS

CHRIS WILLIAMS

MARY FAY

BETH KERRIGAN

LIAM SWEENEY

BEN WENOGRAD

Alternate:

CARL DONATELLI

MATT W. HART

Town Manager

DALLAS DODGE

Corporation Counsel

ESSIE S. LABROT

TOWN CLERK

1 PRESIDENT CANTOR: All right.
2 Calling the 6:45 public hearing to order,
3 ordinance reducing the number of parking
4 spaces required in a food truck area.

5 Rollcall, Ms. Labrot?

6 MS. LABROT: Ms. Blanks?

7 COUNCILOR BLANKS: Here.

8 MS. LABROT: Ms. Cantor?

9 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Here.

10 MS. LABROT: Mr. Davidoff?

11 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: Here.

12 MS. LABROT: Ms. Fay?

13 COUNCILOR FAY: Here.

14 MS. LABROT: Mr. Gold is
15 absent. We have Mr. Donatelli.

16 MR. DONATELLI: Here.

17 MS. LABROT: Ms. Kerrigan?

18 COUNCILOR KERRIGAN: Here.

19 MS. LABROT: Mr. Sweeney?

20 COUNCILOR SWEENEY: Here.

21 MS. LABROT: Mr. Wenograd?

22 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: Here.

23 MS. LABROT: And Mr. Williams?

24 COUNCILOR WILLIAMS: Here.

25 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,

1 Ms. Labrot. Thank you, Mr. Donatelli for
2 filling in.

3 Before we get started allow me
4 to set forth the procedures for the public
5 hearing. We will begin by having staff make
6 a presentation concerning the proposed
7 ordinance. Following the presentation members
8 of the public may comment on the proposed
9 ordinance.

10 All persons who are interested
11 in speaking on the proposed ordinance should
12 enter their name on the sign-up sheet
13 available at the table next to the door. I
14 will call speakers from the sign-up sheet.
15 All persons recognized should approach the
16 podium, give their full names and address.

17 Unless given permission by the
18 Chair only West Hartford residents or
19 taxpayers may comment. All speakers are
20 confined to three minutes each, except that
21 person who's providing the duly authorized
22 position of a group of individuals may speak
23 for up to five minutes.

24 Only one person may speak at a
25 time. The Chair has the discretion to extend

1 the time for any speaker. The speaker should
2 direct their comments to the Chair and
3 comments must be germane to the merits of the
4 proposed ordinance. The Chair will ensure an
5 orderly hearing, and if necessary take steps
6 to maintain order and decorum at all times.

7 In the event it becomes
8 apparent that the public hearing cannot be
9 concluded this evening the hearing may be
10 continued to another date with appropriate
11 notice as required by law.

12 We'll start with a
13 presentation from staff. Thank you.

14 MR. HART: Thank you, Mayor.
15 And I will be making the presentation on this
16 item. It is a very straightforward
17 amendment, as you will see.

18 So as the Council is well
19 aware, our food truck park ordinance is
20 relatively new. It's just a couple of years
21 old, and we have one food truck park under
22 construction in the vicinity of New Park
23 Avenue.

24 The applicant would like to
25 increase patron seating at the new park. The

1 challenge that he is facing is that
2 additional seating would require additional
3 parking, and the opportunities to construct
4 additional parking at that location are
5 limited.

6 So given the fact that the
7 food truck park would be a new use and that
8 ridesharing services, Uber, Lyft and others
9 for entertainment purposes have become more
10 prevalent; the location of the park is in
11 close proximity to public transit. For those
12 reasons I think it would be appropriate, and
13 recommending this amendment to modify the
14 parking factor in order to increase the
15 number of seats per parking space.

16 The proposed amendment that's
17 in front of you would increase the factor
18 from three seats to five. This would allow
19 the applicant to increase the number of seats
20 in the new establishment from 72 to 120,
21 which you can see is significant and should
22 be beneficial for operations.

23 I do want to highlight that
24 the amendment would apply to all future --
25 all future food truck parks that would be

1 permitted under the ordinance. We don't
2 anticipate that this change would have any
3 adverse financial impact on the Town, and
4 Corporation Counsel's office has reviewed and
5 approved the form and legality of the
6 proposed ordinance.

7 That completes my overview,
8 Mayor.

9 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
10 Mr. Hart. Any questions or comments for the
11 Town Manager?

12 Mr. Donatelli?

13 MR. DONATELLI: When I first
14 read this -- two out of the three reasons for
15 doing this would apply to almost any food
16 service establishment in town. So why just
17 restrict it to this? Why not make it
18 available? Ride service is available,
19 rideshare service is available throughout the
20 town. Bus service, public transit is
21 available throughout the town.

22 So why just this one business?

23 MR. HART: Good question.
24 It's not just this, this one business. It's
25 for this one ordinance. So it would impact

1 any food truck parks that would be permitted
2 under the ordinance.

3 We have a variety of parking
4 factors in our zoning ordinances depending on
5 the use. So as part of our review we really
6 focused on this one particular use. This was
7 not a comprehensive analysis of the various
8 parking factors for other types of uses.

9 MR. DONATELLI: Is that
10 something you would see undertaking, I mean
11 in light of at least those two items that
12 you're listing impacting?

13 MR. HART: No, although I
14 would point out that the Council's Community
15 Planning and Economic Development Committee
16 will be looking at parking factors more
17 generally as they review the recommendations
18 of our recently completed plan of
19 conservation and development.

20 MR. DONATELLI: Okay. I mean,
21 it just struck me that this ordinance was
22 initially put together for a specific
23 business. He's benefiting from that, and now
24 he's getting additional benefit from other
25 business as far as parking regulations.

1 MR. HART: I understand the
2 point. And just to clarify, it's for a
3 specific use, not just one business.

4 MR. DONATELLI: Thank you.

5 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
6 Mr. Donatelli.

7 Anybody else have any comments
8 or questions?

9
10 (No response.)

11
12 PRESIDENT CANTOR: No? Okay.
13 Do we have anybody signed up? In the
14 meantime, is there anybody that didn't sign
15 up that would like to speak to this?

16
17 (No response.)

18
19 PRESIDENT CANTOR: No.

20 So Mr. Nordon, I think you
21 wanted to speak.

22 TATE NORDEN: Tate Nordon, 19
23 Nesbit Avenue. I guess, you know, to be
24 brief I won't reiterate -- but I'll support
25 all of the comments that the Town Manager

1 just stated.

2 Some points of emphasis.

3 First and foremost, I think the one thing
4 that's important to keep in mind comparing
5 this type of use, obviously this is happening
6 in a transit oriented development in town.
7 So we're seeing a lot of different regions
8 adapt a more relaxed parking code, especially
9 in areas that are focused on private
10 transportation.

11 One thing that was not
12 mentioned -- and I think this kind of fits
13 into our overall marketing plan as a whole.
14 You know, in addition to supporting
15 ridesharing and public transportation and the
16 whole spirit of the transit oriented district
17 we really wanted to make a concerted effort
18 to highlight the Trout Brook Trail. I think
19 that's a real underutilized gem. I think
20 it's got great potential, great bones.

21 I know as we get open we would
22 like to try and see how we can facilitate and
23 support efforts to further improve that,
24 because there's a sizable audience that lives
25 very close to walking distance, both in

1 residential neighborhoods as well as the
2 apartment buildings that are being
3 constructed and will be constructed along
4 Park Avenue. So I think that's an important
5 distinction to make.

6 The businesses in this area
7 also aren't benefiting from municipal parking
8 garages, lots. So there's a lot of things,
9 the T and D that kind of make parking a
10 little more challenging in this particular
11 area of town.

12 But that will conclude my
13 comments, but I just want to thank town staff
14 for first and foremost being open to
15 considering in looking into these types of,
16 you know, innovative solutions to the
17 challenges that are facing us. And what
18 makes sense with what's going on with trends
19 in the dining space, but also in the
20 transportation space. So thank you very
21 much.

22 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
23 Mr. Norden.

24 Is there anyone else that
25 would like to speak at this public hearing?

1 (No response.)

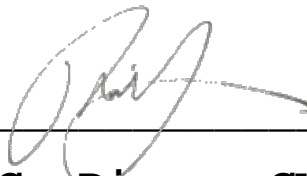
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3 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay. I'd
4 like to read in for the record a letter dated
5 February 5, 2020 from TPZ recommending
6 approval; and a letter dated March 10, 2020,
7 from CROG finding no apparent conflict.

8 And with that I will close the
9 public hearing.

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11 (End: 6:56 p.m.)
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CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing 12 pages are a complete and accurate computer-aided transcription of my original verbatim notes taken of the Public Hearing in RE: ORDINANCE REDUCING THE NUMBER OF PARKING SPACES REQUIRED IN A FOOD TRUCK AREA, held before the West Hartford Town Council, at Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, Room 314, West Hartford, Connecticut, on March 10, 2020.



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My Commission Expires: 6/30/2020